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ISSUE NO. 57 • NORTHEASTERN, CONNECTICUT

DOWNTOWN MAP INSIDE • JANUARY - MARCH 2018

For an afternoon, a day, or a weekend...come and enjoy Northeastern Connecticut!

Artist: Barbara Lussier

Winter has arrived and the Quiet Corner has much to offer those who are looking to get out and explore! Putnam is growing, in addition to all the existing shops & restaurants, some new businesses have come to town including: Block 134, K's Sweet Spot and Sadies Sweet Shop! This year Putnam's Fire & Ice Festival will liven up the streets on February 10th from 10am to 10pm and on March 11th, the O'Putnam 5K! Northeastern Connecticut has always been well-known for it's talented pool of artists, in this issue we are featuring award-winning artist Barbara Lussier of Pomfret, see inside to learn more about Barbara, her work and how you can purchase a painting to grace your home to grace your home for years to come. For the adventurous type, Griffin Youth Hockey offers lessons to adults and children at all levels. There are also a variety of programs offered by the Connecticut Audubon Center in Pomfret. Hope you enjoy, please tell our advertisers you found them here!

INSIDE:

Local Advertisers...Downtown Putnam Events...This issue of the ***Putnam Traveler*** features... ***Block 134***...located on 134 Main Street in Putnam...houses a collaborative group of businsses in one beautiful retail location...***The Griffin Youth Hockey Association***...since 1973 this all-volunteer association has been teaching adults and children how to skate and play hockey (no experience required)... ***Award-Winning artist Barbrara Lussier***..."I am an artist and I am going to have my paintings at the Rockport Art Association," announced nine-year old Barbara Lussier to her family...little did she or her family know that within 20 years, she would in fact exhibit her paintings at the venerable art institution and establish a career that continues to flourish from her studio in Pomfret...and ***Three Ways to Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth***...in alphabetical order: ***K's Sweet Spot, Pomfret Chocolates and Sadies Sweet Shop***..."Chocolate is now where wine was forty years ago," says Jim Weiss, the founder of Pomfret Chocolates.

Downtown Putnam & Area Maps • Businesses • Local Activities • Shopping & Events

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BLOCK 134: The Sum of its Parts

BY KATHY NAUMANN

In an unassuming brick building on Downtown Putnam's Main Street, characteristic of Romanesque commercial architecture from the 1880s, there is an equally unassuming yet beautifully inviting sign, perched just overhead the sidewalk, guiding people to Block 134. 134 Main Street is an address but Block 134 is so much more...

Block 134 is in a building with a bit of history in Putnam; once owned by Bugbee and Bosworth, a partnership of local merchants, it housed a hardware store, barber shop and pharmacy. With its corbelled cornices and decorative brick effects, the building has distinguishing features which almost seem to reference a medieval fortress. Fast forward nearly a century and a half and the building located at 134 Main Street still stands strong and still houses multiple businesses, but completely welcomes people IN. Today, the businesses located at 134 Main Street consider themselves a Collective and are simply known as Block 134: Evelyn Cole Smith Architects, LLC, Epiphany on Main, Pomfret School Gallery, Silver Circle Art Center and Gallery and GLO to Health, LLC.

Blocks, by definition, are basic units from which something else is built up. With five separate, unique and rather artistic businesses carving out individual space within one large shared space, Block 134 is aptly named. Heading up the brightly lit stairs to the businesses residing at Block 134, a visitor feels more like a guest heading to a new friend's apartment, rather than a patron. Similar in function to roommates, all with their own room, this concept of Co-Retailing allows business owners to pool resources such as sharing space and customers, and support each other through flexibility, scalability and networking, for increased success. Ultimately, collaboration saves time and money and by leveraging each other's strengths, businesses that share space, can benefit.

The first tenant at Block 134 is Evelyn Cole Smith Architects LLC. For three decades, Ms. Smith has practiced architecture, designing residential, commercial and institutional spaces that stimulate both individual and collective senses. Firmly rooted with an undergraduate degree in sociology, her practice reflects a keen understanding of community, context and the creation of a sense of place. A deep appreciation for the historic structures that enrich our communities naturally led Ms. Smith to focus her architectural practice on historic preservation, integrating the principals of sustainability and historic preservation. When it came time to search for a new office location, Ms. Smith recounts "Many professional offices in the Quiet Corner tend to be in suburban-like business buildings. Given the nature and variety of our work, we were intent on finding a space which was both urban and historic. While opportunities were few, we came upon Block 134 and immediately saw exactly what we had in mind; an office with excellent light, great views and one which provides us with a presence in the heart of the Quiet Corner and the Putnam Downtown District." Within the Collective of businesses making up Block 134, Ms. Smith's profession and depth of experience certainly offers an insight into successful form, function and cohesion for spaces. "You will find a mix of several styles in play at Block 134. Though not coordinated, they all work well together," she adds.

Anchoring the opposite side of the Block is Silver Circle Art Center and Gallery, owned and operated by Carly Sage Martin, which finds a new home not far from its former location. When presented with the opportunity to relocate the gallery to Block 134, Carly saw it as a way to further cultivate what she had always envisioned: a diverse, dynamic, multi-purpose, creative and inspiring space with an expansive feel. "The increased square footage we have available will allow us to continue with our current gallery format and introduce rotating exhibits again, bringing both local and regional artists and attracting a more diverse demographic to our area. The new space will also allow Silver Circle to increase the classes and workshops offered, further develop the Integrative Therapeutic Arts Program (ITAP), partner with other community establishments, organize local events and fundraisers and offer the gallery as a private event venue.

Overall, the location provides more exposure as a retail business and lends itself better to the mission of the establishment." In addition, Carly notes that "The new space feels bright, uplifting and full of creative potential."

Silver Circle Gallery is celebrating its ninth year in Putnam as an art center dedicated to fostering community art appreciation and education, promoting regional artists and providing a space for them to engage with the public. Carly has been a native of Northeast Connecticut for 20 years prior to her founding of Silver Circle and has combined studies in Expressive Visual Arts, Integrative Health and Clinical and Functional Nutrition. In terms of the move, Carly comments "A fresh start in an aesthetically inspiring space, is perfectly suited for the gallery's current operation and future goals. The new sense of hope, possibility and with lots of fun planning, have breathed new life into the mission of the gallery and its active members. The dynamic feeling within the gallery is palpable and invigorating. Creating change is often what is needed to move forward in an even better direction...and we have!"

In addition to Carly's passion and education in the arts, Carly has a passion for and education in wellness and nutrition which, naturally, lead her to open, in her new space, a new business; GLO to Health. Here, Carly works closely with clients using evidence-based,

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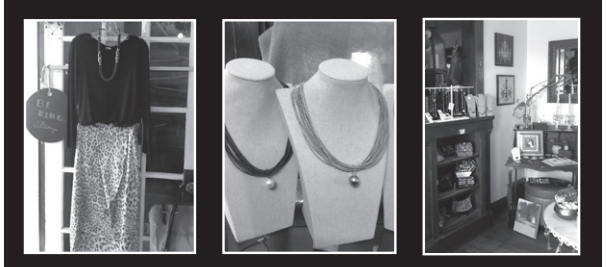
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integrative food and lifestyle modifications to alleviate symptoms naturally at the root cause. Carly acts as a personal health detective, teaching client's tools to correct, restore and maintain health as the foundation for life-long well-being and optimal vitality. Her work is based in the emerging functional medicine health care paradigm, which sees the body as an interrelated system.

Located within Silver Circle, and also having moved from its former location, is Pomfret School Gallery. Founded in 2013, PS Gallery is the official art gallery of Pomfret School, a nearby private boarding and day secondary school. The space is home to rotating exhibits of students, faculty and guest artwork and performances. Students have a place to immerse themselves in the real-world experiences of creating and curating exhibits and programs for a community. The Pomfret School Gallery offers the public opportunities to experience innovative, multidisciplinary arts exhibits and programs and to connect with others.

Rounding, or, perhaps, more appropriately, "squaring", out the Collective, is Epiphany on Main, a unique retail shop. The shop has recently gone through a rebirth of its branding and retail pieces, offering statement décor, accessories, clothing and vintage pieces that pay homage to the authentic industrial western vibe.

In speaking with Carly, one cannot help but notice how important community is to her. Her community pride seems to drive her business success, "The fine art and retail boutique at Silver Circle are curated to offer an alternative to mass-produced products. Intentional, handcrafted, quality items by local artisans and artists directly support our area's economic vitality and diversity." With its unique yet cohesive layout, the businesses at Block 134 bring a genuine sense of warmth, personalization and charm to the Town of Putnam.

Much like the building in which they reside, the businesses at Block 134 are firmly rooted in reflecting the past with growth toward the future. The art center and galleries look to the future with plans for more art classes, rotating art exhibits and ongoing collective member art displays, live studio weekends with visiting artists, artisan markets, special events, enhanced ITAP programming, partnerships with area organizations, fundraisers and much more.

(Left) Artist, Rebecca Pempek, Pomfret School Graduate '16

"Connecticut, the Quiet Corner and Putnam all have significant historic treasures that will provide a foundation for future growth. Evelyn Cole Smith Architects, LLC future lies in helping to preserve those treasures while providing the built environments needed to support a growing community." With the location and unique layout of Ms. Smith's office, it is apparent that her commitment to her work philosophy transcends to her space.

Block 134, as a Collective, truly personifies the space it is in. Individually, these businesses may operate separately, but collectively, they form a cohesive and culturally rich space, offering unique opportunities for Putnam residents and visitors to embrace. "The combination of our professional office, the retailers, galleries and performance space provides a rich mix of art and artists, with more than a little historic emphasis throughout each entity. The variety of art forms represented at Block 134 provide a natural magnet for those interested in artistic endeavors," says Ms. Smith. Carly describes the Collective as a place which "reflects shop owners and their vision of individuals who have a passion they want to share with their community in order to make it a better place to live. The shop owners support one another in a shared space, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Block 134 may be an innovative concept for Downtown Putnam, but a strong collective foundation to build upon is the structure necessary for true success.

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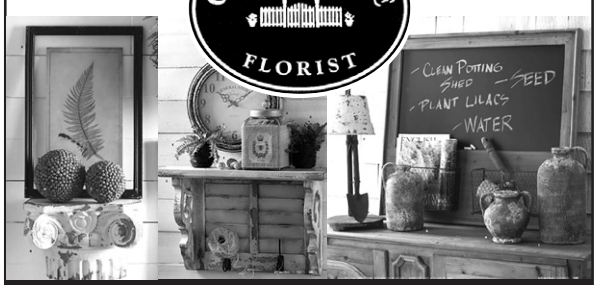

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Griffin Youth Hockey Association

BY NANCY P. WEISS

The air inside Jahn Ice Rink at Pomfret School is cool and clean. The ice is momentarily a perfect surface unmarked by skates and sliding bodies. Members of Griffin Youth Hockey soon energize the scene as boys and girls, men and women lace up their skates and, despite heavy padding and helmets, assume an air of nearly balletic grace as they skim round and round the rink.

The program, an all-volunteer effort started in 1973, called the Griffin Youth Hockey Association, is chaired by Pomfret resident George Dodds. Dodds, whose son and daughter sparked his initial involvement, heads a diverse group of adults who give freely of their time to make sure children in the area have the chance to learn how to skate and how to play hockey.

"I volunteered initially because my son was starting to skate, and from there I felt I should help out and I've had fun doing so. I've met great people and I feel a great deal of satisfaction every time I come off the ice, seeing all those sweaty, smiling faces. To me, that is the greatest feeling," Dodds said.

The young skaters have a talented, inspirational coach in addition to a strong volunteer support system. Bruce Wolanin grew up in Canada and went to high school in a village of 120 people. From an early age he was an outstanding hockey player, whose skills and drive earned him a place at Yale University, where he majored in biology and earned four varsity letters skating with their varsity team. Bruce then enjoyed a brief pro career before returning to his alma mater as a hockey coach. Fortunately for Griffin Youth Hockey and Pomfret School, where Wolanin is the junior varsity hockey coach and Director of College Counseling, his own growing family and his professional interests drew him to the area. This year is his 11th as the head coach of Griffin and their Director of Travel Operations.

"Coaches helped me so much in my life. My wife and I have three boys who have all played hockey. It would have been wrong not to share my time and experiences with them and other youngsters. We have approximately 200 boys and girls in our program. The other adults are great and together we get kids involved learning to skate, play hockey and have fun," Wolanin said.

Diverse and open, the league offers basic classes for beginning skaters, including adults. The adult "Learn to Skate" program, one of the most popular, fills up quickly with 30 as the limit for men and women. Adults are coached by Andy Hooper and Moe Gravier, who are devoted to their jobs and are instrumental in directing participants to ever higher levels of skill and participation.

Recreational skating is the "House" program where youngsters play each other and enjoy being part of a team and building their skills. The House program, which runs through eighth grade, is the league's "bread and butter," according to Wolanin.

More competitive youths can become part of Griffin's five travel teams, which teach higher-level skills and provide competition against other teams in the Tri-State community. Willingly House players and those interested in travel teams begin the season early by training after Labor Day at the UConn rink. Wolanin also leads USA Hockey coaching clinics in Connecticut to train coaches from across the state.

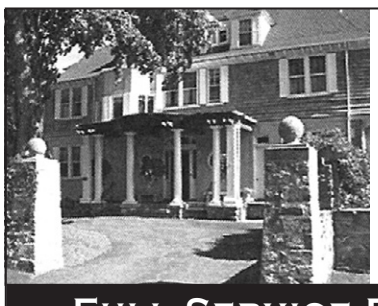
While the cost to play with Griffin Youth Hockey is somewhat lower than most programs, players and their families may need assistance and can benefit from scholarships sponsored by a local non-profit, Northeast Opportunities for Wellness (NOW). Cost for the first member of a family to play with the house team is $500. The second family member pays $400 with $1,000 as the maximum cost for a family regardless of the number of players. Travel program costs are around one-quarter of typical fees in other organizations.

"Griffin has a warmth to it. Gear is donated and there are equipment swaps," Wolanin said, noting too that through the efforts of parents, spearheaded by TJ Billiard, local businesses step up as sponsors in support of the programs. Currently there are fifteen area businesses providing sponsorships.

Griffin Youth Hockey is focused on its number one goal, which is maintaining the House program and continuing to build the travel program. Board President Dodds shared a fun idea the group has of building a medium-sized rink at the Pomfret Little League field that would be open, weather permitting, for outdoor games and skating, under the lights and during the day.

Through Griffin Youth Hockey, area young people have the chance to learn to skate, play competitively and work as a team. The adults, who volunteer, get the chance to have fun with their children and with other skaters in the program. Some also improve their skills as skaters and hockey players while forging strong bonds with other families.

For more information on Griffin Youth Hockey Association contact chairperson@griffinhockey.org or write to Griffin Youth Hockey Association, Inc., P.O. Box 5, Pomfret, CT 06258 or go to Facebook, Griffin Youth Hockey Association.



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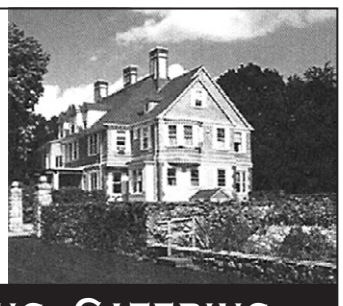

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Barbara Lussier "Paints Her Way Through Life"

BY NANCY P. WEISS

"I am an artist and I am going to have my paintings at the Rockport Art Association," announced nine-year old Barbara Lussier to her family. She has just seen a story in Life magazine and it had captured her lively imagination. Little did she or her family know that within 20 years, she would in fact exhibit her paintings at the venerable art institution and establish a career that continues to flourish from her studio in Pomfret.

Lussier grew up in a creative environment. Her mother was an accomplished seamstress, designing and crafting unique garments. Of her three sisters, one is a writer, one a jewelry maker, and another an accomplished photographer. Her father was a musician and a boater and fisherman, while her beloved grandmother was an avid gardener. If a love of art is bred in the bone, perhaps Ms. Lussier can trace her talent to a distant relative, Osious Leduc, a Canadian painter, who emigrated from France to hone his craft.

After graduating from schools in Belchertown, Mass., Lussier studied at the Ringling School of Art in Florida. There she faced the challenges that often discourage young artists. One of her professors told her that she was "not good enough" and really didn't have the talent to stay in the program. Rather than shrink from the rebuke, she stiffened her resolve and found a source of strength that carries her forward to this day.

"Being a successful artist is about motivation more than talent. That's the truth I came to learn. I went to school with people who were very talented, but many have produced very little. I've kept on painting. I was born with that motivation. Talent can't replace it," she said with a smile, noting that even in subzero weather, she dons a ski suit and steps out into the early morning dawn to capture light on snow.

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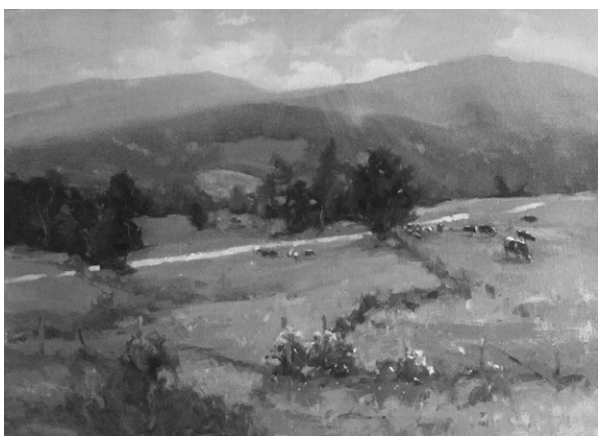
Barbara is a landscape painter in the tradition of the Old Lyme and American Hudson River School. Her work is done first in nature, where she sets up her easel and begins with quick strokes to capture the scene in front of her. Her veneration of nature expresses itself through her paintings. Her fascination with the interplay of light and shadow draws her outside at all hours and in all weather. One especially cold winter she got frostbite on her nose and fingers from working long hours outside.

"I paint my way through life. I'm looking for that spark as I work when all of a sudden something magic happens. I paint not only what is there in front of me but also what might be there. When I paint a scene, I own it," Lussier said.



Her intensity when in the field is so great that she calls it her "painting coma". She paints on the edge of rural roads, by waterways and marshes, or with permission, on farms. She is especially drawn to cows, preferring Holsteins with their intriguing black and white patterns. Once she was so engrossed in her work that a calf was born right next to her and she failed to notice until the farmers approached and pointed out the little miracle that had transpired practically at her feet.

As a teacher, Barbara Lussier has an intense relationship with her students, and stretches them by getting them to answer important questions about their

paintings almost as soon as they begin. She wants them to ask – What is this painting about? Why am I doing it? She knows that one can attain a certain level of technical proficiency but create a work that is visually boring. She sees herself as always practicing and trying to get her paintings to make better, more intense statements. "The painting is a conversation with yourself," she tells her students.

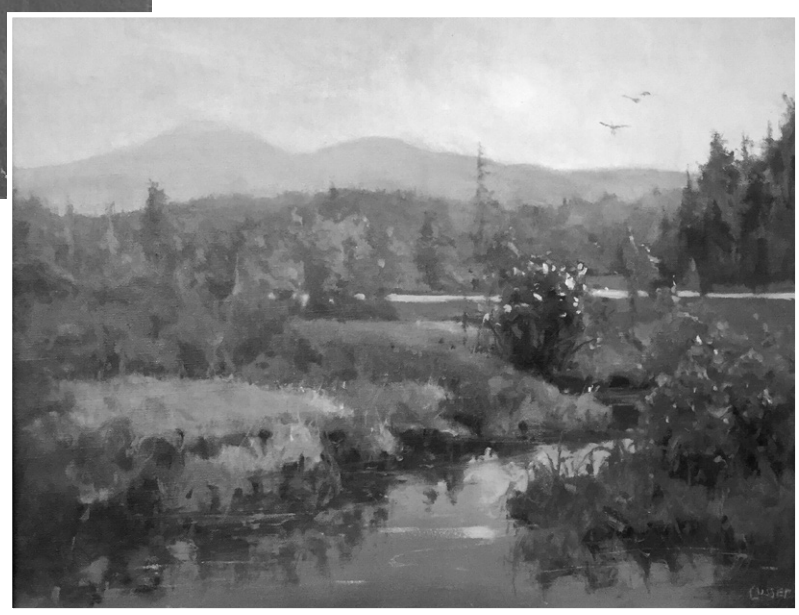
If the paintings are a form of communication, Lussier has mastered the form. Her works sell regionally, nationally and internationally. Part of her appeal is the result of a plethora of awards, earned over the years from juried shows and exhibitions. Her work has been shown at the Springfield Art Museum, Connecticut Academy of Fine Art, The Rockport Art Association, and the Sylvan Gallery Landscape to name a few. One especially touching one for Lussier is the Bernard Cory Award from the Academic Artists Association, given in memory of a painter friend, for a scene in Jeffersonville, Vermont of cows, where she was attacked by a rambunctious bull, although she didn't notice until she was clearly in danger.

Marketing one's work is a challenge and while Lussier may be asked if a painting will match a prospective client's sofa, she is also consulted to help people develop their own collections or purchase paintings that will become family heirlooms.

"A lot of people want recognizable scenes. What I do is traditional. It is in the spirit of Monet, who was a gardener just as I am. I garden the way I paint, making broad swaths of color and mixing flat with texture."

Lussier and her husband, scientist, Robert Craig, have restored an antique farm in Pomfret, including renovating a barn into a studio where remarkable paintings depict a world and a way of life that resonates with art connoisseurs as well as people who just know they like her paintings. For Barbara Lussier, it isn't a surprise. She knew when she was a little girl that she was destined to be a celebrated artist.

For more information go to www.BarbaraLussierGallery.com or babsart@snet.net.



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Three Ways to Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth

BY CAROLINE SLOAT

In alphabetical order, they are K's Sweet Spot, Pomfret Chocolates, and Sadie's Sweet Shop. K's and Sadie's are in the same block in downtown Putnam: flanking Pomfret Street between Kennedy Drive and the Main Street intersection. Old timers might still recall "Montgomery Ward's" and "LaPointe Jewelers," but times have changed and so has Putnam. Pomfret Chocolates are being made once again, but there is currently no walk-in retail space; they are available at pop-up locations and tastings that are announced on Facebook. Indeed, Facebook is the go-to way to keep up with all three of these sweet sources.

For each of these new proprietors, these ventures are a second act. Retirement led Vivian and Charlie Kozey to **K's Sweet Spot**; a simmering interest in chocolate led Jim Weiss to relaunch **Pomfret Chocolates**; and for Sadie's Jenna Perez, back at school to train as an accountant, it was a business plan created for a course that wowed her professor. With her husband's encouragement and family support, **Sadie's Sweet Shop** was born.

The Kozeys celebrated the opening of their shop, **K's Sweet Spot,** for all things chocolate at 112 Main Street, Unit 10, with a ribbon cutting on October 6, 2017. This was the result for a search for a location that would be visible and accessible and Charlie's year of research for reputable sources of chocolates to stock their new retail location. Having sold the Kochek Company that he had co-founded with his brother and recently sold, Charlie took his talent for sourcing to the world of chocolates. When two small units with windows at street level became available, the Kozeys created their new addition to the Shops at Montgomery Ward. The units were combined and furnished with antique fixtures found in local shops. Their goal was to create a quaint and homey

feeling, "one that fits in Putnam," says Vivian.

Part of the space was transformed into a hot chocolate bar with bistro tables to relax and sip one's creation. If you have your computer and time to linger, there is even Wi-fi. When warm weather returns, the offerings will change to milk shakes using Farmers Cow milk and ice cream. The freezer already holds Farmers Cow ice cream sandwiches and Hosmer Mountain sodas. "We do not offer coffee: Ben's Beans and Victoria Station already do that very well."

At the center of the shop are cases with fudge and chocolate truffles. These are the "main things we have," notes Vivian, pointing out a feast for the eyes: some fifteen flavors of fudge and trays of large and small truffles and hand-painted chocolates. These include turtles that can be purchased individually or selected to fill a box. Each hand-painted confection depicts the nut contained within–almond, cashew, macadamia, pecan, pistachio, walnut, or peanut.

The shop tour continues with introductions to dipping sauces and toppings, bark, and chocolate bars. All I lacked was a basket, and yes, it is possible to select items to make up a gift basket to take along or have delivered to Day Kimball Hospital or a local nursing home. (This thoughtful service reflects Vivian's former career in the medical field.)

K's Sweet Spot is also available to sweeten your gatherings with chocolate. This delightful service came about by surprise and sooner than anticipated, after their boxed truffles turned into the perfect favor at their son's wedding. Chocolate "bars" can also be arranged for a shower or other gathering.

Meanwhile across the street is **Sadie's Sweet Shop** that Jenna Perez describes as the store she "always wanted." She confesses to having a sweet tooth that she would satisfy by ordering on line or driving to a mall. How convenient for everyone–kids of all ages–to have a candy store right here in town! Jenna grew up in Putnam and attended local schools. Her first career was in nursing, but after the birth of her third child, she returned to school with a career with regular hours in mind. Accounting. The final assignment for a class that taught the principles of creating a business plan was a project that Jenna wanted to be about "something fun ... a candy store." After presenting the plan, Jenna was pulled aside by the instructor. "Are you serious?" she asked, after praising the plan. It turned out that Jenna was, but first she had to finish the program. With her husband's support, she registered the name of her business in July 2017. Once she had the name–honoring her mother

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Sadie—getting the shop launched became a family affair. The old LaPointe building required renovation. Her husband did that work; her father built the cabinets; her brother-in-law crafted the built-in candy boxes; and her sister in Pennsylvania built the website **(www.sadiesweetshop.com)** and advised on technology. Jenna selected and ordered the candy.

The space is bright and filled with all kinds of candies; the collection includes organic and natural sweets as well as familiar brands. Many of the candies are old-fashioned and nostalgic (also hard-to-find). They lead adults to exclaim, "I haven't seen this since I was a child." They can now introduce dots and jaw breakers and other "penny candies" to their children. Remember whistle pops and ring pops? Cry Babies, Warheads, and Necco wafers? There are also new novelties: gummies with new flavors and shapes such as barbecue, kebabs, hot dogs, and even sushi, reminding one that this is 2018. (And indeed there is a basket with allergy-free candies.) There are giant mint lentils, chocolate bars and taffy. And jelly beans and jelly bellies, in many flavors and bright colors. Remember bubble gum cigars, a clever birth announcement. Bins of bulk candies are stocked for sale by the pound. For fun, fill a jar with your own selection of gummy bears (and bring it back to refill it). Or fill a gift basket (small, medium or large) with your choice of goodies. On-line ordering is coming; check the website. Having a party or event? Ask Jenna about scheduling her candy table service. She has candies in holiday colors or whatever the occasion for the party.

"Chocolate is now where wine was forty years ago," says Jim Weiss, the founder of **Pomfret Chocolates.** "There is a growing interest in fine chocolate." Varietals and heirloom breeds have been saved and are being propagated, just as with wine, apples, and other agricultural produce." And there is a lot to consider in terms of where the beans are grown—the "terroir," and how it is reflected in the beans and the resulting "flavor notes and mouth feel." In addition to the selection of beans, the way they are cultivated and brought to market is also receiving attention. "There has been a growing interest in higher end, high quality chocolate across the country," says Jim whose curiosity was piqued by this subject.

When retirement was still a few years off, Jim discussed his search for "something new" with his daughter. (Both chocolate or gelati intrigued him.) He soon found himself enrolled in a course at École Chocolat in Vancouver, Canada, a course that was fortunately online. Pam Williams's curriculum was intensive and tough, but he was still too busy with work for his interest in chocolate to be more than a hobby. Once he sold his interest in Weiss and Hale Financial LLC, wrapping up a long career in the financial services industry, Jim had the time to follow his new passion: making small-batch, handcrafted fine chocolate and membership in the Fine Chocolate Industry Association.

Jim describes himself as a chocolatier, a purveyor of his own goods. He has studied the history of fine chocolate and learned the techniques of working with it. He works with Guittard and Valrhona, from France, and Callebaut, a chocolate from Belgium. Specialized equipment is required for tempering the chocolate to produce bonbons, truffles, and bark and to make such delectable fillings that it appears as if imagination is the only limit.

About 80 percent of the world's chocolate is now grown in West Africa, but "much of the higher quality growth is found in Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, and Madagascar in East Africa," says Jim. He is cautious about the "fair trade" designation because "subsistence-level growers may have difficulty complying with the criteria, yet they are in a better position to preserve heritage varieties and produce small quantities for processing."

After a brief hiatus, Jim has relaunched Pomfret Chocolates. They are now produced at CLiCK, a non-profit food-based small business incubator and community space in Willimantic that offers training for food workers and gardeners. Jim's team includes pastry chef Johanna Roda-McNaboe, a graduate of Johnson and Wales, and Marketing Director Victoria Chilinski. They have developed new packaging and a new business plan. Sustainability is an important value of the suppliers that are the sources for Pomfret Chocolates. The chocolatier purchases chocolate in large bars or little pieces for preparations that become the chocolate shells for bonbons, bark, and chocolate flavored fillings for bonbons and truffles. To the extent possible, Jim incorporates products local to the Quiet Corner, such as cream from the Farmers Cow and vodka from Westwood Hill Distillery.

Each piece of chocolate is labor intensive and the result of several steps. Why go to such lengths to produce chocolate-covered treats? For Jim, it's all about the flavor notes and mouth feel. He is eager to share this knowledge through tastings, an important part of his plan for 2018. An online shop is in the works, as is a possible retail location.

This coming year, however, Pomfret Chocolates will be available at pop-up shops that will be publicized on Facebook or on the Pomfret Chocolates website **www.shop.pomfretchocolates.** Anyone not on Facebook may request e-mail alerts by contacting **Pomfretchocolates@gmail.com**. K's Sweet Spot is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday, and Thursday through Saturday hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. The hours for Sadie's Sweet Shop are Tuesday and Wednesday from noon to 6 p.m.; Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Note that both Sadies and K's are closed on Mondays. **All of the shops are on Facebook where special announcements are posted.**

Putnam is now the home of sweets and chocolates aplenty. Any day, and especially on Valentine's Day, sweet treats from K's Sweet Spot, Sadie's Sweet Shop, and Pomfret Chocolates are a winner.

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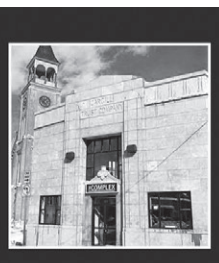

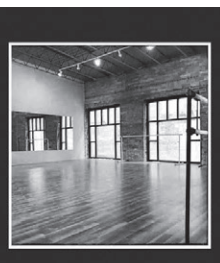

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